

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A vehicle steering system installed in a vehicle comprising:

an environmental-condition detecting unit which
5 detects environmental-condition in a rear and on both sides of the vehicle at least;

a steering actuator which operates in response to an operation of a steering unit for steering and applying steering force to a steering mechanism;

10 a decision unit which decides whether an object approaching the vehicle from behind exists and whether the action of steering toward the side of the vehicle can be taken on the basis of the results detected by the environmental-condition detecting unit; and

15 a control unit which forces the steering actuator to operate on the basis of the result decided by the decision unit irrespective of the operation of the steering unit.

20 2. The vehicle steering system according to claim 1, wherein the control unit makes the steering actuator perform a forcible steering operation to one side decided to be appropriate by the decision unit when the decision unit decides that an object is approaching
25 the vehicle from behind at a speed exceeding a

predetermined relative speed.

3. The vehicle steering system according to claim
1, further comprising an alarm device for issuing a
5 predetermined warning according to the operating
command given by the control unit before the steering
actuator performs the forcible steering operation.

4. The vehicle steering system according to claim
10 3, wherein the control unit decides whether a driver
takes an avoidance steering during a predetermined
period from when the predetermined warning is issued,
and

wherein when the control unit decides that the
15 driver does not take the avoidance steering during
the predetermined time, the control unit forces the
steering actuator to operate.